

Message Text

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ACTION L-03

INFO OCT-01 IO-13 ISO-00 AF-08 ARA-06 EA-07 EUR-12 NEA-10

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TAGS: EGEN, ECOSOC, UNGA, EINV

SUBJECT: ILLICIT PAYMENTS WORKING GROUP

REF: USUN 3936

1. THE RESUMED ECOSOC TO ELECT THE WORKING GROUP ON ILLICIT PAYMENTS HAS BEEN RESCHEDULED FOR SEPTEMBER 30. AT THIS POINT, THERE IS A DEARTH OF NON-WEO CANDIDATES. AS A RESULT, THERE IS A STRONG MOVE UNDERWAY, PRIMARILY G-77 BUT WITH SOVIET-BLOC SUPPORT, NOT REPEAT NOT TO EXPAND THE GROUP BEYOND THE 18 MEMBERS CALLED FOR IN THE RESOLUTION WITH "EQUITABLE GEOGRAPHIC DISTRIBUTION" PATTERNED ON THE CURRENT ECOSOC MEMBERSHIP (I.E. 4 OR 5 WEO MEMBERS). THIS POSES SERIOUS PROBLEMS FOR THE WEO GROUP WHO HAVE NINE ANNOUNCED CANDIDATES, AND THE END RESULT COULD BE AN OPEN ELECTION RATHER THAN AN AGREED SLATE OF WEO CANDIDATES. IN ADDITION, THE PRESENT LACK OF INTEREST BY OTHER REGIONAL GROUPS DOES NOT BODE WELL FOR THE EVENTUAL SUCCESS OF THE EXERCISE.

2. USUN, AND TO SOME EXTENT OTHER WEO'S, HAVE ARGUED THAT THE WORKING GROUP SHOULD INCLUDE THE PRINCIPAL COUN-

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TRIES INVOLVED IN THE SUBJECT MATTER, AND THUS "NORMAL" GEOGRA-

PHIC DISTRIBUTION MIGHT BE TREATED AS SUI GENERIS IN THIS INSTANCE. WE WILL CONTINUE TO PUSH THIS LINE, BUT IT HAS NOT BEEN ACCEPTED BY OTHERS OSTENSIBLY FOR FEAR OF SETTING A DANGEROUS PRECEDENT. FURTHER, THE EGYPTIANS HAVE EXPLICITLY TOLD US THAT ANY ATTEMPT TO TAMPER WITH TRADITIONAL GEOGRAPHIC REPRESENTATION WOULD ENDANGER THE ACCEPTABILITY OF THE FINAL RESULTS OF THE WORKING GROUP.

3. IN VIEW OF THE ABOVE, THE DEPARTMENT MIGHT WISH TO CONSIDER APPROACHING CAPITALS OF SELECTED NON-WEO COUNTRIES URGING THEM TO SEEK MEMBERSHIP ON THE WORKING GROUP. WE RECOGNIZE THE PROBLEMS INVOLVED BOTH IN TERMS OF TIME AND SELECTIVITY. BUT SHOULD OTHER REGIONAL GROUPS, SAY THE AFRICANS OR LA'S, EXCEED THEIR LIKELY ALLOCATION UNDER AN 18-MEMBER FORMULA, CHANCES OF OBTAINING AN EXPANSION IN THE SIZE OF THE GROUP SUFFICIENT TO ACCOMMODATE WEO INTEREST ARE GREATLY IMPROVED. AS AN ALTERNATIVE TO THE ABOVE, WE MIGHT WISH TO RECONSIDER THE QUESTION OF SEEKING AGREEMENT TO HAVE ONE EC-9 SPOKESMAN.
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